Subject: UPDATE – News Regarding 2006 Reporting Specifications

The purpose of this message is to notify you of a **VOLUNTARY** change to the hospital discharge data reporting specifications for 2006.

This **VOLUNTARY** change has been implemented at the request of several hospitals around the state, and is being made only to assist those hospitals who choose to use it.

Commencing with the reporting for 2006-01 (January 1, 2006 through June 30, 2006) that is due no later than August 15, 2006, we are adding a 20 character field to the end of the existing data record. This addition (if you choose to use it) will make the record length 880 characters instead of the current 860.

The sole purpose of this field is provide a location within each record for each hospital to place a unique identification number to facilitate record retrieval. This number is sometimes called the patient encounter number or patient account number. By providing this number in the records reported, this number will then be present in any error lists generated by the state, enabling easier record retrieval should corrections or review be necessary.

IMPORTANT FACTS REGARDING THIS CHANGE:

1) This change is VOLUNTARY. If your facility chooses not to use this field, NO ACTION is necessary. You will continue to report the same 860 character length record exactly as before.

IF YOU CHOOSE TO UTILIZE THIS FIELD:

2) Your record length will be 880 characters.

3) There are no formatting requirements for this field. You may use alpha, numeric, or special characters, and any justification that works for you.

4) The identifier you place in this field is up to you – it is for your use only.

5) This field will not be audited by the state.

6) Information from this field will not be present in any data released by the state.

7) If you want to use this field but cannot implement use of this field until a later reporting period, this is acceptable. You may start or stop using this field at any time.

If you have any questions regarding this VOLUNTARY change, please let us know.